DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 083 047 SO 005 406

AUTHOR Abramson, Paul
TITLE Political Efficacy and Political Trust among Black Schoolchildren: Four Alternative Explanations.
SPONS AGENCY National Center for Educational Research and Development (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 5 Feb 71
GRANT OEG-0-70-2028(725)
NOTE 53p.; Paper prepared for the conference on "Political Theory and Social Education," Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, February, 1971

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Black Community; Changing Attitudes; *Educational Sociology; Intelligence Differences; Literature Reviews; Negro Attitudes; Negro Education; Negro Role; *Political Attitudes; *Political Power; *Political Socialization; Racial Differences; *Racial Factors; Research Utilization; Self Concept; Social Attitudes; Social Environment; Social Structure

ABSTRACT

The goal of this paper was to evaluate four alternative explanations to account for low feelings of political effectiveness and political trust among black school children. A discussion of research findings related to political efficacy and trust and a review of other pertinent research are followed by definitions of the basic concepts in the paper. The normative implications of the findings seem to point out that political attitudes of childhood do persist to adulthood; thus to teach adult blacks to be politically effective, the political attitudes of young blacks must be changed. The alternatives that explain why racial differences may result are: 1) differences in political education within American schools; 2) social-structural conditions that contribute to low feelings of self-competence among blacks; 3) differences in intelligence; and 4) differences in the political environment in which blacks and whites live. The assumptions and empirical consequences of each explanation are discussed. An evaluation of the alternatives concluded that social condition and political environment explanations have the greatest scope and therefore are the best explanations, especially if not considered as being mutually exclusive explanations. (Author/KSM)

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ED 083047

POLITICAL EFFICACY AND POLITICAL TRUST AMONG BLACK SCHOOLCHILDREN: FOUR ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

Paul Abramson

SP 005 406

Prepared for delivery at the conference on "Political Theory and Social Education," Michigan State University, February 5-6, 1971, under grant OEG-0-70-2028(725) from the U.S. Office of Education. Not for circulation, distribution, or publication.

Political Efficacy and Political Trust among Black Schoolchildren: Four Alternative Explanations*

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There are six million black schoolchildren in the United States. Like their white counterparts, they have virtually no political power. Yet, socialization research suggests that black children feel less politically powerful than white children do. Like their white counterparts, black children have little or no experience with which to evaluate the trustworthiness of political leaders. Yet, black children are less likely to trust political leaders than white children are.

Feelings of political powerlessness and political distrust appear to develop among blacks even before they become adults, and it is important to explain why these feelings develop.

If we wish to change blacks' attitudes so that they will become more effective political actors, we must know not only what black attitudes are, but how they are learned. If we wish to build theories about the differential political socialization of sub-cultural groups, we need to go beyond mere findings and toward the development of social science explanation. And, if we are to construct better research designs for future socialization research, we must attempt to explain those socialization findings that are currently available.

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*I wish to thank David V. J. Bell, Wilbur B. Brookover, Cleo H. Cherryholmes, Timothy M. Hennessey, Frank A. Pinner, and David W. Rohde for their comments on an earlier version of this paper. I also thank Nancy K. Hammond for her editorial assistance.

My goal in this paper will be to evaluate four alternative explanations to account for low feelings of political effectiveness and political trust among black schoolchildren. Through this evaluation, I will assess the normative, theoretical, and research implications of extant socialization research about black Americans.

I. Basic Findings

Socialization researchers have studied a wide range of political attitudes among American schoolchildren (See Dawson, 1966; Patrick, 1968; and Dawson and Prewitt, 1969). In this paper I will focus on two basic findings:

Finding 1: Black schoolchildren tend to have lower feelings of political effectiveness than white children do.

Finding 2: Black schoolchildren tend to have lower feelings of trust toward political leaders than white children do.

Definition of Basic Concepts

By black I mean "socially considered to be black;" by white, "socially considered to be white." I employ van den Berghe's (1967: 9) definition of "race." "We consistently use the term race . . . to refer to a group that is socially defined but on the basis of physical criteria."

By schoolchildren I mean children and adolescents enrolled in grades K-12.

Political effectiveness can be conceived as a norm, as a disposition to be effective, or as a behavior. One views efficacy as a norm when he says that persons should be able to influence political leaders. One

conceives of efficacy as a disposition when he says that people feel that they can influence political leaders. And one views efficacy as a behavior when he discovers that people do, in fact, influence political elites. Because the findings I interpret are about respondents who were too young to exert much actual influence upon political leaders, I will examine only the first two dimensions of this concept.

Since 1954, numerous political scientists have studied political effectiveness,[1] but Lane (1959: 147-155) offered the most thorough and imaginative treatment of this concept. Lane interpreted political effectiveness as a conviction that the polity is democratic and government officials are responsive to the people. Lane's concept has two components, the image of oneself as effective and the image that the government is responsive. Collectively the items used in the studies discussed below tap both dimensions of this concept. For the purposes of the explanations to be developed, I take the view that the items do not tap merely "regime norms" as to how political leaders should respond (See Easton and Dennis, 1969), but actual beliefs about effectiveness and responsiveness.

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[1]Measures of the conept of "sense of political efficacy" were first introduced in 1954 by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan (Campbell, et al., 1954). The authors used responses to five items to measure subjective sense of integration in the political system. This scale was used in the next Michigan study (Campbell, et al., 1960). Numerous empirical studies have used essentially the same concept, although it has been labelled "sense of effectiveness" (Douvan and Walker, 1956); "political potency" (Agger, et. al., 1961), "subjective political competence" (Almond and Verba, 1963), and "readiness for political participation" (Matthews and Prothro, 1966). Several authors have directly measured ineffectiveness and have used the terms "sense of political futility" (Kornhauser, et al., 1956) and "political anomie." (Farris, 1960). Two recent attempts to refining the concept are Finifter (1970) and Muller (1970). See Robinson, et al. (1968: 441-481) for compilation of some of these measures, as well as for measures of political cynicism.

Easton and Dennis (1967) have made the most important contribution to the study of feelings of political effectiveness among schoolchildren, although in this paper I essentially reject their interpretation that feelings of efficacy among schoolchildren should be conceptualized as a "regime norm."

Feelings of trust toward political leaders have been studied less often.[2] A feeling that leaders can be trusted involves a belief that they will usually be honest and will usually act in the interests of the people. Feelings of trust may also involve a belief that leaders are competent. Some of the studies reported below directly asked children whether leaders could be trusted. However, two of the studies measured "political cynicism," which may be considered roughly the converse of political trust.[3]

Elaboration of the Basic Findings

The most impressive evidence that young blacks tend to feel less politically efficacious than young whites came from a national probability sample of 1,669 high school seniors conducted in 1965 by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center (S.R.C.), (Langton and Jennings, 1968). The study was confined to twelfth graders only; and, as a significantly smaller proportion of blacks than whites attend the twelfth grade (See Coleman, 1966: 452-459), one cannot confidently extrapolate from the S.R.C. findings to all balcks of that age, a limitation that Langton and Jennings recognize. But since blacks who drop out of high school tend to have those socio-economic background characteristics associated with low

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[2]Relatively few studies have examined feelings of trust toward political leaders among adult respondents. Among these are Agger, et al. (1961); Litt (1963b); McClosky and Schaar (1965); Aberbach and Walker (1970). Several political scientists have studied trust among children and adloles-cents. For example see Pinner (1965), Easton and Dennis (1969), and Abramson and Inglehart (1970). Measures of political cynicism among school-children have been employed by Jennings and Niemi (1967), Langton and Jennings (1968), Jaros, et al. (1968), and Lyons (1970).

[3]We assume that persons who score "low" on cynicism should be considered "high" on trust. Although the cynicism questions used by Langton and Jennings (1968) and by Lyons (1970) include only one item that directly asks whether political leaders can be trusted, they do seem to tap the dimensions of trust that I specified above: a belief that leaders are honest, are concerned with the people's interest, and are competent. (See note seven below.)

feelings of political efficacy, racial differences on sense of political efficacy may well be lower in the S.R.C. sample than among the universe of all persons of high school age. If so, the S.R.C. results are all the more impressive. For among the 186 non-whites sampled,[4] over twice as many blacks as whites scored low on the political efficacy scale.[5] Moreover, these differences were not spurious; they cannot be eliminated by applying such standard control variables as level of parental education.

Lyons (1970) also found blacks to feel less politically efficacious than whites. His data are based upon a study of 2,868 fifth- through twelfth-grade students sampled from the Toledo City Public School System in 1968. Lyons found that, whereas 47 per cent of the white students (n = 1293) scored high on sense of political efficacy,[6] only 32 per cent

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[4]The sub-sample of 186 non-whites included "twelve respondents classified as non-whites, other than Negroes" (Langton and Jennings, 1968: 859).

[5]The authors employed two items to build their political efficacy scale (Langton and Jennings, 1968: 856):

1. Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.
2. Voting is the only way that people like my mother and father can have any say about how the government runs things.

For both items, disagreement is efficacious. The authors report a CR of .94.

[6]Lyons used the following items to measure sense of political efficacy:

1. What happens in the government will happen no matter what people do. It is like the weather, there is nothing people can do about it.
2. There are some big, powerful men in the government who are running the whole thing and they do not care about us ordinary people.
3. My family doesn't have any say about what the government does.
4. I don't think people in the government care much what people like my family think.
5. Citizens don't have a chance to say what they think about running the government.

For all these items, disagreement was scored as efficacious. Lyons used these measures to build a simple additive index. Previous researchers have used these items and also report them as an additive index. See Hess and Torney (1967: 256-257) and White (1968: 714-715). White (1968: 722) noted the dangers of an acquiesence response set with these items, although he discounted the importance of this problem. Easton and Dennis (1967: 28) used somewhat different items to measure sense of political efficacy, but they also report their measure to be an additive index.

of the black students (n = 752) did. As in the S.R.C. study, racial differences were not spurious.

Laurence (1970) also reported that black children feel less politically efficacious than white children do. Her data base is a sample of 178 black and 821 white children from racially integrated fifth-, sixth-, and eighth grade classes in Sacramento, California, in 1968. Although she did not develop a cumulative measure of sense of political efficacy, Laurence presented the responses of two items that have been used to measure feelings of political efficacy among schoolchildren. Among whites, 41 per cent agreed that "People in the government care about what people like my family think, "whereas, among blacks, 31 per cent agreed. Among whites, 53 per cent disagreed that "My family doesn't have any say in what the government does," whereas among blacks 43 per cent disagreed. However, Laurence applied no socio-economic controls to attempt to assess the source of these racial differences.

Jones (1965) reported the only finding of which I am aware that showed black schoolchildren to be more efficacious than whites. Questionnaires were administered to 733 adolescents in grades eight through twelve in Lake County, Indiana (mainly Gary), in 1963. Respondents were presented with the following statement" "People like me and my family don't have any say about what the government of our city does." Among white children (n = 427), 28 per cent agreed, among blacks (n = 298), 25 per cent agreed. Jones introduced no controls to explain this surprising reversal, but one would not expect such a result to be spurious in the normal statistical sense because blacks had lower social class origins than whites.

Jones' finding is based upon only one item, and it refers only to one's ability to influence political leaders in "our city." Consequently, I will not modify the basic finding that black schoolchildren have lower feelings of political effectiveness than white children do. I will, however, reintroduce the Lake County findings later in this paper.

Whereas the S.R.C. survey provided the most conclusive evidence that black schoolchildren feel less politically efficacious than white schoolchildren, it does not support our finding that blacks are less trusting of political leaders than whites. Langton and Jennings developed a six-item scale to measure political cynicism.[7] In their sample, 23 per cent of the blacks scored high on political cynicism, whereas 21 per cent of the whites scored high. But the restriction of S.R.C. sample to twelfth graders only may have contributed to these negligible racial differences, since blacks who drop out of high school tend to have those socio-economic background characteristics associated with high feelings of political cynicism. In any event, three other studies of racial differences among schoolchildren all show blacks to be less trusting of political leaders than are whites.

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[7] Langton and Jennings (1968: 856) used the follwing six items to measure political cynicism:

1. Over the years, how much attention do you feel the government pays to what the people think when it decides what to do?
2. Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are a little crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are?
3. Do you think that people in government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?
4. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right?
5. Do you feel that almost all of the people running the government are smart people who usually know what they are doing, or do you think that quite a few of them don't seem to know what they are doing?
6. Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?

They report that these items formed a scale with a CR of .92.

In his Toledo study, Lyons found that, whereas 41 per cent of the white children scored low on political cynicism (i.e., high on trust), only 27 per cent of the black children did.[8] As with his findings about sense of political efficacy these racial differences were not spurious. Laurence asked schoolchildren about their trust in people in general, in authority figures, including political leaders, and in elected black leaders. She discovered sharp differences according to race: whereas 74 per cent of the white children agreed that the "Policeman can generally be trusted," only 46 per cent of the black children agreed. Laurence did not fully report upon responses to other items measuring trust, but she noted that white children were consistently more trusting than blacks, except in trust toward elected black political leaders.

Greenberg (1969: 296-297) also found black children to be less trusting than whites. Greenberg administered questionnaires to 980 Philadelphia schoolchildren in grades three through nine in 1968. Children were asked if "the Government in Washington can be trusted." Sixty-five per cent of the white children (n = 462) thought the government could be trusted, whereas 54 per cent of the black children (n = 401) did, and these racial differences were not the spurious result of social class.

Despite the fairly consistent evidence that blacks are less trusting of political leaders than are whites, they are as likely as whites to view the American President as benevolent. Sigel (1965) administered a

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[8]Lyons used the last five items used by Langton and Jennings to develop an additive index. He does not report whether he could have used these items to form a scale with his Toledo sample.

questionnaire to 1,349 primary and secondary schoolchildren in Metropolitan Detroit within three weeks of President Kennedy's assassination. She compared the responses of 1006 white children with those of 342 black children. Black children were more likely than whites to feel pronounced grief over Kennedy's death, to show more hostility toward the assassin, and to worry about how the United States would get along without its leader. In his study of fourth-, to eighth-grade Detroit area schoolchildren, Jaros (1966; 1967) built a "Presidential Benevolence Scale"[9] and found no racial differences on this measure. Using his Philadelphia sample, as well as an additional sample conducted in Pittsburgh, Greenberg (1970b) developed an "index of presidential support."[10] Blacks were less supportive of the President than whites, but differences were small.

These findings about attitudes toward the President do not directly measure trust toward the President, and thus they do not lead us to modify our basic finding that black children are less trusting of political leaders than white children are. For the time being I will not attempt to explain these attitudes toward the President, although I will reintroduce these findings later in this paper.

Evaluation of the Findings

How reliable are these findings? Can we safely extrapolate from these findings to the universe of black and white schoolchildren? Vaillancourt (1970) demonstrated that black schoolchildren tend to have less stable

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[9]Jaros developed a seventeen item scale with a C-R of .79. See Jaros (1966: 138-141) for a complete list of these items, as well as the scaling procedures.

[10]The items included (Greenberg, 1970b: 340):
The President is/ is not friendlier than most people.
The President is/ is not more helpful than most people.
I like/ don't like him very much.

attitudes across time than white children do.[11] But even a low level of stability among individual attitudes across time does not preclude the possibility that mean differences between groups have been reliably measured. In any event, we have no way of assessing directly the extent to which feelings of political effectiveness and political trust can be reliably measured among blacks. But these items do have considerable face validity and we have no reason to believe that they do not tap the same attitudes among blacks as they do among whites.

It is also true that racial differences on political efficacy and trust were usually not large, although in most cases we can reject the null hypothesis that racial differences are likely to be the result of chance. But the strongest reason for accepting these findings as phenomena to be explained is the high level of consistency among findings from separate studies. Three separate studies report that black schoolchildren feel less politically efficacious than white children do, and in measuring trust toward political authorities, three of four researchers found black children to be less trusting than whites. The consistency of such findings in separate studies is a better test of their reliability than the rejection of the null-hypothesis in a single study. Of course, neither the rejection of the null-hypothesis among a non-random sample nor the consistency of findings in separate samples provides any basis for calculating the probability that such findings would obtain among the universe of American schoolchildren. But the consistency of the

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[11] Vaillancourt's study is based on a three wave panel study conducted in the San Francisco Bay area in late 1968 and early 1969 and included 1,001 children in the fourth, sixth, and eight grades. Not only did she find blacks to have less stable responses to attitudinal items, they also were found to be less stable on items that purported to measure facts about immutable characteristics.

findings provides a sound reason for developing explanations. Further, we have an even more compelling reason to attempt to explain these findings. If true, they have considerable normative significance.

II. Normative Implications of the Findings

What children believe about politics is probably unimportant unless these attitudes persist into adulthood. Certainly, early political attitudes are not immutable. They can be changed as an individual engages in reality-testing in the world of real politik. Nevertheless, to some extent, attitudes that we acquire as children probably do tend to persist. If the low feelings of political efficacy and trust that black children have persist into adulthood, they may tend to limit the effectiveness of blacks as political actors and to erode their commitment to democratic political procedures.

Students of politics have had a traditional interest in the relationship between political participation and democracy. Indeed, one empirically-based generalization about the maintenance of democracy is that the governed must develop the habit of having and expressing opinions because they expect to be heeded by political elites. Although this feeling of effectiveness is not a necessary condition of political activity, it contributes to the propensity to accept democratic rules and procedures. (See Almond and Verba, 1963: 230-247). Black adults have lower feelings of political effectiveness than white adults,[12] and they are also less

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[12] Campbell and his colleagues (1954: 191-192) found black adults to feel less efficacious than whites. Marvick's (1965: 120) re-analysis of the Civic Culture data found that blacks scored lower than whites on political efficacy items, even when contrasted to a "match paired" sub-set of whites. In her re-analysis of the Civic Culture data, Finifter (1970: 399) also found blacks to feel "politically powerless" as compared with whites, although racial differences were largely a function of education. The only finding of which I am aware that found black adults to feel more politically efficacious than whites was Kornhauser's study of Detroit union members (1956: 157). However, Kornhauser's finding has not been replicated.

likely to participate in politics.[13] Low feelings of political effectiveness among blacks almost certainly lower their levels of political participation, and thus deprives blacks of a major political resource, the ballot.

Blacks could be less trusting than whites,[14] but might still use their political resources effectively. But unless blacks are able to trust their own leaders,[15] these leaders will have little bargaining power and their ability to win benefits for their followers will be weakened. And, if blacks have very low levels of trust for white political leaders, they may cease to make demands upon these leaders for the authoritative allocation of resources. Or they may turn increasingly to non-conventional methods to make their demands known. Some provisional data, reported by Eisinger (1970), show that black protesters who are "committed" to protest activity,[16] tend to evaluate violence favorably, have low commitments to

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[13] Milbrath (1965: 138) concluded that "Negroes participate in politics at a much lower rate than whites." Subsequent research shows that, once one controls for SES, such black-white differences are eliminated or reversed. See Olum (1966); Olsen (1970).

I would argue that low feelings of political effectiveness probably contribute to nonparticipation by blacks and that, if blacks felt more efficacious, they would be more likely to participate. Blacks do participate less than whites, a fact that can be easily established by aggregate data analysis. The fact that SES "controls" can eliminate such differences does not change the fact that low rates of political participation deprive blacks of political resources.

[14] Unfortunately, neither Agger and his colleagues (1961) or Litt (1963) report on black-white differences. There are data, however, that suggest blacks are less trusting than whites. Marvick (1965: 119) found that they were far less likely to expect equal treatment from public officials than were the "matched pair" sub-set of whites, and that these differences persisted with the effects of region controlled. Aberbach and Walker's (1970) survey of adults in Detroit in 1967.found blacks to score markedly lower on political trust than whites, and these differences were not the spurious result of social class differences.

[15] J. Q. Wilson (1960: 5-8; 174-176), Clark (1966: 193-198), and Long (1969) all argue that blacks tend to distrust their own leaders.

[16] A "committed" protester had (1) engaged in protest activity more than once and (2) believed that protest activity could be effective.

norms of compromise, and have low levels of electoral participation. Not surprisingly, committed protesters also had low feelings of trust toward public officials.

In short, if one wants to teach blacks to be effective political actors in a democratic polity, he will also want to raise the feelings of political effectiveness and trust among young blacks. But to do so one must understand why blacks have low feelings of efficacy and low feelings of trust.

III. Four Alternative Explanations

Let us consider four basic explanations for racial differences in feelings of efficacy and trust.[17] All four can be considered inductive probabalistic explanations:

Explanation A: Racial differences result from differences in political education within American schools. I will call this the political education explanation.

Explanation B: Racial differences result from social-structural conditions that contribute to low feelings of self-competence among blacks. I will call this the social deprivation explanation.

Explanation C: Racial differences result from differences in intelligence: blacks are less intelligent than whites. I will call this the intelligence explanation.

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[17] One might advance the explanation that attitudinal differences between black and white schoolchildren result from attitudinal differences between black and white adults. But, even if this could be demonstrated, it would not constitute an adequate explanation unless we explained why black and white adults differed. Problems concerning the intergenerational transmission of political attitudes are discussed in my evaluation of Assumption D. 3.

Explanation D: Racial differences result from the differences in the political environment in which blacks and whites live. I will call this the political reality explanation.

In principle, these four explanations could be mutually exclusive, although in the actual world of American society and politics the circumstances out of which they arise are not. However, I will begin by considering each explanation separately, although I will conclude with a comparative evaluation.

A. The Political Education Explanation

American schools explicitly teach political values through the formal content of their curricula. But teachers may also stress political values implicitly. Black children probably are not explicitly taught that they have little ability to influence political leaders, but they may be indirectly taught not to participate actively in politics.

The following assumptions constitute the political education explanation:

Assumption A.1. Students do learn political values taught in the schools. In other words, the schools are effective agents of political socialization.

Assumption A.2. Teachers are less likely to stress norms of political participation when teaching black children than when teaching white children.

Each of these assumptions can be questioned:

Assumption A.1. Unless children learn the values taught in schools, differences in political education cannot contribute to racial differences in political values. American schools attempt to teach political values, but we have no compelling evidence that children learn them. Unlike

ideas about mathematics or physics, which are learned almost exclusively in the school, children can learn about politics from a wide variety of sources and thus the effectiveness of the school as a political socialization agent is weakened. In fact, there is little direct evidence that the schools succeed in teaching political values.

The strongest argument for the power of the school as an agent of political socialization was advanced by Hess and Torney, who discovered that siblings were not likely to have identical political attitudes, except on partisanship. They concluded that "the school apparently plays the largest part in teaching attitudes, conceptions, and beliefs about the operation of the political system" (1967: 217). In their analysis of the S.R.C. study of high school seniors, Jennings and Niemi (1968) directly compared the attitudes of high school students with those of their parents. They found that seniors were unlikely to have the same political values as their parents (except for partisanship) and concluded that the school might be playing a greater role in the political socialization process than had previously been believed. For example, they speculated that the low levels of political cynicism among high school seniors might result from values taught in the school. But both these conclusions are based entirely upon indirect evidence about the failure of the family to transmit political attitudes, not upon direct evidence that the values taught in the schools are learned by students.

Langton and Jennings used data from the S.R.C. study to evaluate the impact of the high school curriculum in teaching political values. Their conclusions do not directly bear upon the political education

explanation, however, because it concerns the content of political education, not whether or not civics courses are taught. We should note, however, that Langton and Jennings found that the inclusion of formal civics courses had almost no effect upon the political attitudes of high school seniors, except among blacks. Among blacks, those who had taken formal civics courses scored substantially higher on feelings of political effectiveness than those who had not. On the other hand, the high school curriculum appeared to have no influence upon political cynicism among blacks.

The assumption that students learn the political values taught in schools is not supported by extant research. But neither do extant research findings allow us to reject this assumption.

Assumption A.2. Even if we accept the assumption that the schools are effective agents of political socialization, the political education explanation can not be valid unless blacks and whites are taught different values. We can advance sound reasons for the expectation that blacks are taught different values than whites. A large percentage of American blacks live either in the South or in the ghettoes of Northern cities, and, in most of these settings the school authorities are white. It is entirely plausible that in such schools the norms of political participation are not emphasized. Since white teachers probably do not see blacks as future social and political leaders they may subtly teach blacks that political participation is inappropriate.

Few studies, however, demonstrate that blacks are taught to be political non-participants. Using his observations in two North Carolina cities, Seasholes (1961: 84-86) argued that in Southern schools blacks

are taught the "norm" of non-participation. Several impressionistic studies of the education of blacks at least indirectly support the assumption that blacks are taught non-participation. (See Kozol, 1967; Silberman, 1970: 89-90.) Perhaps the most suggestive study of educational differences among different types of American schools was by Litt (1963a) who found sharp differences between working- and middle-class schools in the Boston area. Teachers in middle-class schools stressed the norms of political participation while those in working-class schools emphasized obedience. But Litt's study does not present data according to racial differences.

We have little data to support the assumption that blacks are taught different political values than white students are, but neither do we have data that allow us to reject this assumption. If, however, we provisionally accepted the assumptions of the political education explanation, it would have one additional empirical consequence.

Empirical Consequence A.1. Black schoolchildren will be less likely to have a participatory view of the polity and their role within the polity than white children will.

Greenberg's (1969; 1970a: 267-273) research suggests that black schoolchildren are more likely than whites to have a "subject" as opposed to a "participant" orientation toward the American polity, and that these racial differences are not the spurious result of social class. Langton and Jennings (1968: 863-864) found that, in defining the role of the good citizen, blacks were less likely than whites to stress participatory norms and were more likely than whites to stress loyalty. Laurence's (1970: 180) research showed that black schoolchildren are less likely to participate in politics than white children are.

Despite our inability to support its assumptions empirically, the political education explanation does appear capable of accounting for the low political efficacy of black schoolchildren. Can it also account for their low feelings of political trust? One could argue that the political education explanation would predict that blacks should be more trusting than whites, for, if the schools teach blacks to be non-participants, they should also teach them to be loyal to political authorities. Of course, there might in specific settings, for example, given a teacher who is a black militant, in which black children are taught to have low feelings of political effectiveness and high levels of political cynicism. But in most settings blacks are not taught to distrust political leaders. At best, then, the political education explanation is silent as regards Finding 2.

B. The Social Deprivation Explanation

The social deprivation explanation can be summarized as follows. Social deprivation contributes to low self-competence. Feelings of personal self-competence contribute both to feelings of political effectiveness and to feelings of political trust. Blacks are socially deprived and consequently their feelings of self-competence are low. Low self-competence among blacks contributes to their low levels of political trust.[18]

The following assumptions constitute the social deprivation explanation.

Assumption B.1. Persons deprived of opportunity and accorded respect tend to have low levels of self-competence.

Assumption B.2. Persons who have low self-competence tend to have low feelings of political effectiveness.

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[18] In his discussion of the political socialization of blacks, Seasholes (1965) makes a similar argument, although he focuses on political participation as his main dependent variable.

Assumption B.3. Persons who have low self-competence tend to have low feelings of political trust.

Assumption B.4. Black children are deprived of opportunity and accorded respect.

Assumption B.5. Black children have lower feelings of self-competence than white children do.

There is both theoretical justification and empirical support for each of these assumptions.

Assumption B.1. Erikson (1963: 249) argued that some level of basic trust is essential to feelings of personal adequacy: "The firm establishment of enduring patterns for the solution of the nuclear conflict of basic trust versus basic mistrust in mere existence is the first task of the ego." Trust is not easily maintained, Erikson believes, for a child must eventually be abandoned by his parents. "It is against this powerful combination of a sense of having been deprived, of having been divided, and of having been abandoned--that basic trust must maintain itself throughout life" (1963: 250).

Self-competence and interpersonal trust are clearly related. Although Smith (1968) acknowledged that basic trust is essential for developing feelings of personal adequacy, he maintained that, given an essential minimum of trust, hope is the more critical attitude in explaining self-competence. Smith's analysis of the social conditions supportive of self-confidence provides us with a useful starting point for the social deprivation explanation.

Smith postulated a set of social psychological conditions that mutually reinforce feelings of self-competence. For a self-confident individual, "the self is perceived as causally important, as effective in the world--which is to a major extent a world of other people--as likely to be able

to bring about desired effects, and as accepting responsibility when effects do not correspond to desire" (281). This attitude leads to a distinctive world view, in which feelings of personal efficacy are coordinate with an attitude of hope: "The world is the sort of place in which, given appropriate efforts, I can expect good outcomes. Hope provides the ground against which planning, forbearance, and effort are rational" (Smith, 1968: 282). These feelings of effectiveness contribute to an active orientation: "With these positive attitudes toward self and world goes a characteristic behavioral orientation that throws the person into the kinds of interaction that close the benign circle. . . This is, in effect, an active, coping orientation, high in initiative . . ." (282).

Feelings of competence are also related to the knowledge and skills necessary to translate an individual's expectations into successful behavior. Such skills, Smith maintained, are "clearly part of the interlocking system." An individual who possesses the appropriate skills and knowledge has a valid reason for feeling efficacious, because he is more likely to be successful than a person with more limited skills.

Although Smith is concerned primarily with the psychological conditions contributing to self-competence, he also recognizes ways in which "factors of social structure--especially social class and ghetto status--impinge on the development of competence" (312-313):

> I think there are such strategic aspects of location in the social structure: opportunity, respect, and power. . . . Restriction of opportunity not only blights hope; it excludes the person from the chance to acquire the knowledge and skill that would in turn enable him to surmount the barriers to effectiveness. Contempt and withheld respect may lead to "self-hatred" and may necessitate debilitating postures of self-defense. Absence of power entails general vulnerability and creates dependence (313).

Impressive data document that persons with restricted opportunity do have low levels of self-confidence. Rosenberg's (1965) findings all support this relationship: adolescents with low social backgrounds scored lower on self-esteem than those with high social backgrounds; adolescents with divorced parents scored lower than those with married parents living together; adolescents with several siblings scored lower than only children; adolescents who said that their parents were not interested in them scored lower than those with interested parents. Coleman (1966) and his colleagues also documented a strong relationship between restricted social opportunity and low feelings of self-competence. In their comprehensive survey of American schoolchildren conducted in 1965, they employed three items to measure a child's "sense of control of his environment." They found that children from families with low economic levels were less likely to feel that they could control their environment than those from families with high economic levels. In addition, children from homes with the father absent scored lower than those from homes in which the father was present.

Factors other than social deprivation also contribute to low self-competence. Coopersmith (1967: 149-180) suggests that early socialization experiences involving the mother-child relationship may be important for the development of self-esteem. But the restriction of social opportunity clearly seems to lower feelings of personal self-competence. (See Haggstrom, 1964; Inkeles, 1968).

Assumption B.2. If the social deprivation explanation is valid, the intervening psychological variable, self-competence, and the two dependent variables, sense of political effectiveness and feelings of

political trust must be related. Lane (1959: 149) has argued that personal self-competence provides a psychological basis for developing feelings of political efficacy: "Men who have feelings of mastery and are endowed with ego-strength tend to generalize these sentiments and to feel that their votes are important, politicians respect them, and elections are, therefore, meaningful processes." Several empirical studies document this relationship. Campbell (1960: 516-519) and his colleagues developed a measure of personal effectiveness that tapped "feelings of mastery over the self and the environment." Persons with high feelings of personal effectiveness were more likely to score high on feelings of political efficacy, and this relationship was not the spurious result of educational differences. Rosenberg (1965: 206-223) found that self-esteem was related to political interest, political discussion, and political knowledge among adolescents, and these relationships all held even when controls were introduced for social class. However, Rosenberg did not directly measure the relationship between self-esteem and feelings of political effectiveness. Research in progress by Sniderman, based upon a national sample of political elites and followers conducted by McClosky in 1956, shows that self-esteem[19] is among the best personality variables for predicting feelings of political effectiveness. Several studies have demonstrated a relationship between personal self-competence and high levels of political participation.

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[19]The measure of self-esteem employed in this analysis, but not the actual findings I report upon in this paper, are reported in Sniderman and Citrin (1971).

Assumption B.3. Erikson's formulation suggests that trust and self-competence are strongly related. Lane (1959: 164) argued that personal trust, self-competence, and trust in political leaders are all related: "If one cannot trust other people generally, one can certainly not trust those under the temptations of and with the powers which come with public office. Trust in elected officials is seen to be only a more specific instance of trust in mankind. And in the long run, this is probably a projection of attitudes toward the self--self-approval."

Although several studies document the relationship of self-esteem to political efficay as well as between feelings of political effectiveness and feelings of personal and political trust,[20] only Sniderman's data show that self-esteem is directly and positively related to political trust. Sniderman offered two explanations for this relationship. In the first place, persons with low self-esteem feel threatened by their environment, and have difficulty developing feelings of trust in others, including political leaders. Secondly, low self-esteem limits an individual's capacity for social learning, both by restricting his social

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[20]This is documented by Rosenberg (1956), Agger, et al.(1961), and Aberbach and Walker (1970). Almond and Verba used Rosenberg's "faith in people" scale, but they did not relate this measure to subjective political competence. However, Roderick Mackler and I, in a re-analysis of the American Civic Culture, data found trust in people to be related to subjective political competence, even when we controlled for level of education. Finifter (1970: 400-401) found low faith in people to be related to feelings of political powerlessness.

However, the relationship between trust and political competence may not hold in all cultural settings. Almond and Verba (1963: 284-288), for example, found faith in people to be correlated with a propensity to form political groups in the United States and Britain, but not in Germany, Italy, Mexico. Litt (1963) found no relationship between political trust and political effectiveness in Boston, but did find this relationship in Brookline, a suburb of Boston. Feelings of trust are, apparently, related not only to psychological attributes but to the actual trustworthiness of political officials.

interactions and by limiting his ability to learn societal values when he does interact with others. Persons with low self-esteem are therefore less likely to learn societal norms, including the norm that political leaders in a democracy can be trusted. Through path analysis, Sniderman found both these explanations to be equally powerful.

Assumption B.4. Unless black children are socially deprived, their low feelings of political effectiveness and political trust cannot be the result of social deprivation. Blau and Duncan's (1967: 207-227) definitive analysis of the American social stratification system clearly documented the black man's lack of social opportunity. (See also Siegal, 1965.) But black children are also directly deprived of opportunity. Regardless of the measure of educational deprivation used, blacks are deprived compared with whites. (See Coleman, et al., 1966: 35-212; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1967: 96-100.) Not only are blacks deprived of social opportunity, they are also deprived of accorded respect. Regardless of their social attainment blacks remain black and are treated by many whites as inferior.

Assumption B.5. If the social deprivation explanation is valid, race and self-competence must be related. As we have documented that blacks are socially deprived, we now have strong theoretical reasons for predicting that they will have low feelings of self-competence. Numerous studies document this relationship.

Several independently conducted studies have found black children to have problems identifying as black (Pettrigrew, 1964: 7-9; Proshansky and Newton, 1968: 182-192). According to Pettigrew (1964: 9) "these identity problems are inextricably linked with problems of self-esteem."

Proshansky and Newton concluded (1968: 182) "there is considerable evidence to support the assumption that there is a direct relationship between problems in emergence of self and the extent to which the child's ethnic or racial membership group is socially unacceptable and subject to conspicuous deprivation." They further argue (191) that conflict in racial self-identification "tends to nourish feelings of self-doubt and a sense of inadequacy, if not actual self-hatred."

Several studies of the black family have stressed the ways in which social disorganization contributes to low self-competence among blacks. (Rainwater, 1966; Schultz, 1969; also see, Office of Policy Planning, 1965). Rainwater (1966: 191) concluded: "In most societies, as children grow and are formed by their elders into suitable members of the society they gain increasingly a sense of competence and ability to master the behavioral environment their particular world presents. But in Negro slum culture growing up involves an ever-increasing appreciation of one's shortcomings, of the impossibility of finding a self-sufficient and gratifying way of living."

Psychologists have painted a particularly bleak picture of low self-competence among blacks. Kardiner and Ovesey (1951) conclude that the American system of slavery, followed by the oppression of the post-slavery period, contributed to low self-esteem among blacks. In their case studies, some of which were with black adolescents, low self-esteem was a common reaction to attempts to control rage (see also Grier and Cobbs, 1968).

Social psychologists, using self-administered questionnaires, have also found blacks to have lower self-competence than whites, although their findings do not seem as strong as those of researchers using psychoanalytic

techniques. Rosenberg (1965: 303-304), for example, found black adolescents to have lower self-esteem than whites, but the differences were small. Coleman and his colleagues (1966: 320-321) found fairly strong racial differences in their measure of "sense of control" over the environment. On all three items used, black children showed a much lower sense of control than white children. A study conducted by A. B. Wilson (1967: 192-193) of junior and senior high school students in Richmond, California, also showed blacks to be much less likely to feel that they could control their environment than white students were.

None of these questionnaire-based studies, however, portrays as bleak a picture of low self-esteem among blacks as that described by Kardiner and Ovesey or Grier and Cobbs. Moreover, racial differences in self-competence may have decreased over the last several years. Research in progress by Brookover reveals that among children sampled in Detroit in 1968 there were virtually no racial differences on measures of self-esteem. Although we do not have adequate data, we can still speculate that increased black militancy has boosted the black adolescent's self-image and thus raised feelings of self-competence. The very use of the term "black," until a few years ago a term of abuse even among blacks, attests to this change (See Billings, 1970).

In summary we have found both theoretical and empirical support for each of the five basic assumptions of the social deprivation explanation. Now let us consider its two additional empirical consequences:

Empirical Consequence B.1. In social settings where blacks have higher levels of social opportunity, they should have higher feelings of political effectiveness and political trust.

A variety of settings might provide the black schoolchild with increased opportunity, as well as higher levels of accorded respect. For example, Coleman suggested that blacks have more opportunity in racially integrated schools than in segregated schools.[21] Therefore, one might predict that blacks in integrated schools would be more politically efficacious and more trusting than those in segregated schools.

Within integrated schools, grouping by academic ability may lead to racial segregation (see Knowles and Prewitt, 1969: 37-40). One might expect, therefore, that among blacks in integrated schools those in schools with no ability grouping or with highly flexible grouping would be more politically efficacious and more trusting than those in schools with highly structured "tracks."[22] Unfortunately, we have no data with which to test this additional empirical consequence.

Empirical Consequence B.2. Among black children, those with high feelings of self-competence should be more politically efficacious and more trusting than those with low self-competence. Controlling for feelings of self-competence should eliminate racial differences on political attitudes.

Lyons' data provide some indirect support for this empirical consequence. He suggested that "the success that a child has in mastering the school environment was considered a probable predictor of how strong a sense of efficacy he would develop" (299-300). At every grade

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[21] Coleman also found that the higher the proportion of whites in the student body, the higher black students sense of control over their environment becomes (1966: 323-324). This finding is fully consistent with Assumption B.1. of the social structure explanation.

[22] For a discussion of the effects of ability grouping upon political socialization in England, see Elder (1965) and Abramson (1967). While he does not discuss political socialization per se, Turner (1960) provides a valuable discussion of the socialization consequences of stratified educational systems.

level, and with every sub-set, school achievement was a good predictor of efficacy. Lyons concluded:

> Achievement in school is equated with more than just intellectual ability; it is probably a manifestation of the personality as a whole. ["Bright" children] tend to be self-confident, self-assured, and are free from unsubstantiated fears and apprehensions. It is quite plausible, therefore, that achievement in school measures a range of psychological predispositions that carry over into the child's attitudes about politics. The greater association between achievement and sense of efficacy among inner-city children appears to arise from the fact that being Negro and a low achiever significantly depresses a sense of political efficacy. In contrast, high achievement and the range of psychological predispositions that are probably measured by achievement apparently aid the Negro child in developing a sense of political effectiveness (302).

But Lyons' data do not demonstrate that controlling for school achievement eliminates racial differences on feelings of political efficacy.[23] Moreover, school achievement was not a good predictor of political cynicism.

C. The Intelligence Explanation

The Easton-Hess study of 12,000 American primary schoolchildren revealed that, apart from age, intelligence was the best predictor of sense of political efficacy (Hess and Torney, 1967; Easton and Dennis, 1967; White, 1968). Abundant data to show that black children score lower on tests of measured intelligence than white children do (Jensen, 1969: 78-88). Even though the Easton-Hess study systematically excluded black children from the sample, a possible consequence of their findings is that the low intelligence of blacks contributes to their low feelings of political effectiveness.

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[23] In the three tables where Lyons (1970: 298-299) shows the relationship of school achievement to political attitudes, he does not also show differences according to race. Thus it is impossible for the reader to determine the extent to which controlling for school achievement reduced racial differences.

The following assumptions constitute the intelligence explanation.

Assumption C.1. The intellectual abilities measured by intelligence tests contribute to feelings of political effectiveness.

Assumption C.2. Blacks tend to be less intelligent than whites.

Although C.2. is a lower level assumption than C.1., it will be helpful to begin by evaluating C.2, for the logical status of the intelligence explanation depends upon the way one interprets the finding that blacks tend to score lower on intelligence tests than whites.

Assumption C.2. To some extent the low measured intelligence of blacks may result from the "culture bound" nature of intelligence tests. Tests are written in standard middle class English, while most blacks speak a dialect, or even argot. To the extent that such tests measure linguistic skills and acquired cultural learning, they fail to measure the cognitive capacities that intelligence tests are presumably designed to tap. But if intelligence tests do not measure intelligence, the intelligence explanation must be rejected.

Let us suppose that intelligence tests do measure intelligence, but that black children, because of restricted opportunities and low accorded respect, do not try to perform well. The intelligence explanation would then be spurious. Suppose black children perceive a world of restricted opportunity in which their intelligence scores are not relevant to their own life chances. These children might simply refuse to play the test-taking game, would not try to score well on the white man's examination, and low intelligence scores would result. Or black children might feel threatened by tests designed and administered by whites. That black schoolchildren score significantly higher on

intelligence tests when they are administered by blacks (Canady, 1936: Baughman dnd Dahlstrom, 1968) suggests that the low intelligence scores among black schoolchildren are at least partly spurious.

Suppose the low intelligence scores of blacks are true scores, and that blacks tend not to have the intellectual capacity necessary to score well. But let us also suppose that this lack of the cognitive capacity resulted from blacks' restricted social opportunity and low accorded respect. Intelligence would then become an intervening variable between the social structures and the political attitudes. The intelligence explanation could then be subsumed by the social deprivation explanation, so long as we specified that intelligence was an intervening psychological mechanism.

Now let us suppose that intelligence precedes social structure. If one could document that white slave traders and slaveowners had systematically reduced the opportunity of intelligent blacks to reproduce, one might then argue that racial differences in intelligence were now genetically based. Or, such differences could be the result of nutritional deficiencies in early infancy, or even before birth. Racial differences would then be somatic and subject to reversal in subsequent generations. But racial differences in intelligence would precede the social deprivation that contributes to the development of low self-competence. Whether racial differences in intelligence were a function of either genetic determinants or nutritional deficiencies, however, the intelligence explanation would have a separate status as an explanation of political attitudes.

An evaluation of current controversies about the relationship between race and intelligence would probably lead us to consider intelligence as an intervening variable.[24] In this paper, however, we need not sort out these arguments. Rather, I will question the assumptions that link intelligence and feelings of political effectiveness.

Assumption C.1. The intelligence explanation is based directly on the assumption that certain cognitive capacities contribute to feelings of political effectiveness. But there is little theoretical reason to expect intelligence to contribute to feelings of political efficacy. White (1968; also see, White, 1969) presented two arguments to explain why intelligence should be related to feelings of political effectiveness among school-children. Firstly, brighter children are better able to understand their environment, and hence they are more likely to believe they can influence it. But this argument is questionable since children, regardless of their intelligence, do not have the power to influence political leaders. Secondly, White advanced a "more socio-psychological" explanation. Intelligence scores may be a measure not only of cognitive ability, but of "certain general personality traits and attitudes which are a manifestation of the child's interaction with his environment," White cites H. G. Gough (1961) who argued that there were "personalogical correlates of general intelligence," first among which were "self-confidence

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[24] In other words, few would conclude that measured intelligence differences between blacks and whites were solely an artifact either of cultural bias or of black children not trying to score well. But there seems to be abundant evidence that to a considerable extent low scores by blacks are the result of environmental differences. See Klineberg (1935); Tumin (1963); Pettigrew (1964: 100-135); Cronbach (1969); and Stinchcombe (1969). However, it would still be necessary to explain the contribution of measured intelligence as an intervening variable if we were to accept the finding that intelligence and feelings of political effectiveness were independently related.

and self assurance . . ." In White's second explanation, intelligence begins to look very much like self-competence. But if intelligence is closely related to self-competence (and may actually in part measure self-competence) and if self-competence is affected by social structures, then the intelligence explanation can be subsumed by the social deprivation explanation.

Hess and Torney said little about why intelligence should contribute to feelings of political effectiveness. They did note (1967: 129) that brighter children "are more completely socialized in political attitudes and behavior" by grade eight than less intelligent children are. Presumably, they consider political efficacy a norm to be learned, and intelligent children are more likely to learn it. Easton and Dennis (1967: 34-35) argued that more intelligent children are more likely to be exposed to political information and thus will be more likely to learn the "regime norm" of political efficacy. In addition, "the brighter child will probably enjoy a greater sense of general confidence and effectiveness, other things being equal. He is more likely to maintain the feeling that he can cope with various aspects of his environment successfully and thus with politics. From this perspective his feeling that the ordinary member of the political system has influence is a natural accompaniment of his own greater ego strength and trust in his capacity to deal with the world." If this second formulation is correct, the intelligence explanation could be subsumed by the social deprivation explanation.

Even if we do assume that there are theoretical reasons for relating intelligence scores as a measure of cognitive capacities to feelings of political effectiveness, we must acknowledge that the empirical finding that intelligence and political efficacy are strongly related is somewhat

questionable. White's analysis can easily be rejected on methodological grounds (See Jackman, 1970; Greenstein, 1970; and White, 1970). Both Hess and Torney and Easton and Dennis used appropriate statistical techniques to evaluate the explanatory power of measured intelligence, but both sets of authors overlooked a major problem of measurement error.

Intelligence data on children were obtained directly from school records, whereas data on the social background characteristics of schoolchildren were provided by the children themselves. Data on social class, for example, were compiled from responses to a closed-ended item in which children were asked to describe their father's job. The job descriptions employed, which were later used to classify students, do not nearly fit standard sociological classifications of occupation.[25] Moreover, the information obtained from schoolchildren about their fathers' jobs was

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[25]The main problem from a practical standpoint is the intermediate category employed by Easton and Hess. This may be seen by comparing the measure of social class used by Easton and Hess (Hess and Torney, 1966: 486) with the ranking system developed by Blau and Duncan (1967: 122-123). There are several major differences:

Easton and Hess ranked all persons who work for the government in an intermediate category, whereas Blau and Duncan rank government workers according to the type of job they perform.

Easton and Hess rank salesmen in an intermediate category, whereas Blau and Duncan rank salesmen over a wide range, according to whether they are self-employed and the type of goods and services they sell.

Easton and Hess rank all proprietors of small stores and shops in an intermediate position, whereas Blau and Duncan rank some proprietors (such as gasoline station owners) below some skilled manual workers (such as electricians or construction foremen).

It would be tedious, but not impossible, to develop a rank order correlation between the two measures and to estimate the error in the Easton-Hess instrument based upon validity problems alone.

I am not here arguing for the superiority of the Blau-Duncan rating over other possible ranking systems. But any measure of social class should be grounded in some theory of social stratification.

almost certainly less reliable than the information about intelligence quotients obtained directly from school records. Given these combined problems of validity and reliability, it is hardly surprising that social class differences in political attitudes were weak. And, it is a truism that a well-measured independent variable should, given a meaningful dependent variable, account for more variation than one which is poorly measured. Since measured intelligence is one of the most reliable measures employed by Easton and Hess, we would expect it to have greater explanatory power than most socio-economic type variables.

In summary, there are few theoretical reasons and only weak empirical reasons to support Assumption C.1. Nonetheless, if we did accept the intelligence explanation, it would lead to one additional empirical consequence:

Empirical Consequence C.1. Among black children, those with high intelligence scores should be more politically efficacious than those with low intelligence scores. Controlling for intelligence should eliminate racial differences on sense of political effectiveness.

My argument is not that such a relationship does obtain, but that it would obtain if the intelligence explanation were valid. But even if we accepted the argument that high intelligence contributes to feelings of political efficacy among whites, it would not necessarily follow that high intelligence would contribute to high efficacy among blacks. For if blacks are deprived of political power, intelligent blacks might be more likely to recognize this powerlessness than less intelligent blacks, and

thus would have low feelings of political effectiveness. In any event, there are no data to test Empirical Consequence C.1.[26]

When we evaluate the explanatory power of the intelligence explanation, we must conclude that it is essentially silent as regards Finding 2. One could argue that persons with low intelligence should be more trusting than persons with high intelligence. (Unless, of course, intelligence scores are a surrogate measure of self-competence.) Persons with low cognitive capacities might be incapable of finding fault with their political leaders, whereas intelligent persons might be more aware that political leaders can be both dishonest and incompetent. On the other hand, an intelligent person might recognize that although leaders are occasionally dishonest, they are more often honest. He might be more likely to learn the norm that political leaders in a democracy can be trusted. There are no empirical data relate intelligence to feelings of political trust. However both Hess and Torney (1967: 135-137) and Easton and Dennis (1969: 363-379) found intelligence to be only weakly and inconsistently related to benevolent attitudes toward authority. Their finding is consistent with my argument that one should expect no such relationship.

D. The Political Reality Explanation

Political scientists have usually considered feelings of political effectiveness and political trust to be largely a function of either sociological or psychological attributes. They have less often considered the way such feelings are affected by actual political power arrangements

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[26]Unless one wishes to use the Lyons data on school achievement as an indirect measure of intelligence. This would perhaps be no more objectionable than using these data, as Lyons has done, as an indirect measure of psychological characteristics known to be associated with school achievement.

and by the trustworthiness of political leaders. Yet, we can argue that blacks have less political power than whites and that they have less reason than whites to trust political leaders. Laurence (1970) specifically and Greenberg (1970a) more indirectly have argued that the political attitudes of black schoolchildren reflect an accurate response to the political realities black Americans face.[27]

The following assumptions constitute the political reality explanation.

Assumption D.1. Blacks have less ability to influence political leaders than whites do.

Assumption D.2. Blacks have less reason to trust political leaders than whites do.

Assumption D.3. Black children know these facts or they are indirectly influenced by adults who know these facts, or both.

These assumptions are not easily documented.

Assumption D.1. This assumption may seem to be a truism, but it is not easy to measure political influence. Obviously, a disproportionately small number of political leaders are black (Matthews, 1954: 24-25; Stone, 1968: 58-81; "Nationwide Black Gains," 1970), but blacks might nonetheless effectively influence white political leaders. Certain

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[27] In her discussion of the political socialization of blacks, Prestage (1968: 538-543) makes a similar argument. She writes: "The political world of American blacks is so radically different from the political world of American whites that it might well constitute a 'subculture' within a dominant or major culture."

Although he did not address himself to political socialization, Young (1969: 1112-1115) concluded that the socialization of blacks must be understood in light of the social realities faced by blacks: "The socialization problem in this respect . . . is how to bring such [black] values into consonance with the requirements of effective social participation as defined by the white majority while, in fact, they remain in large measure in reasonable consonance with the actual circumstances of life for many Negroes."

decision rules, however, tend to minimize the political influence of blacks. Dahl (1956: 116-118) demonstrated that the decision rule that each state have two Senators benefits certain groups, such as cotton farmers and silver miners, but weakens the influence of coal miners, wage earners, migrant farm workers, and blacks. The seniority system in Congress also tends to deprive blacks of political power (See Knowles and Prewitt, 1969: 91-93). On the other hand, the decision rules through which the President is elected may benefit blacks, since many blacks reside in pivotal states with large numbers of electoral votes. (Polsby and Wildavsky, 1968).

The main limitation on their political influence is that blacks are a minority in a system governed by majority rule. Blacks may be part of a coalition of minorities, but they must always seek partners. These partners have helped blacks, up to a point; when the issues involve zero-sum conflicts about which blacks can win only at the expense of whites, blacks are unlikely to win.[28]

Assumption D.2. If blacks are deprived of political power, one might expect political leaders to be less trustworthy in their dealings with blacks than in their dealings with whites. To some extent a leader is more likely to be trustworthy when he is bargaining with persons and groups who have sanctions over him. To the extent that blacks are deprived of political power, they are deprived of the resources necessary to keep political leaders honest.

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[28] Carmichael and Hamilton (1967: 58-84) argue that blacks have been unequal partners in their political coaltions with whites. For one of the few attempts to systematically study black political power, see Keech (1968).

Nonetheless, it is difficult to provide empirical evidence in support of Assumption D.2. Have political leaders broken promises made to blacks more often than promises made to whites? Have political leaders been more corrupt in their dealings with blacks than with whites? Have they been less competent? It would be difficult to empirically demonstrate any of the above.

Assumption D.3. Despite our difficulty documenting Assumptions D.1. and D.2., the political reality explanation is compelling. Its main difficulty is that we are attempting to explain political attitudes among children. Children, unlike adults, have little or no opportunity to engage in reality testing with their political environment. Moreover, compared with adults young children have little political knowledge. Thus, even if we accept as factual that blacks are deprived of political power and have reason to distrust political leaders, we cannot assume that black children know these facts.

Few children, black or white, have a sophisticated understanding of political decision rules or actual knowledge with which to evaluate the trustworthiness of public officials. We have no reason to believe that black schoolchildren are particularly sophisticated in such matters, for on tests of political knowledge black children consistently have scored as less knowledgable than white children (Langton and Jennings, 1968: 859-860; Greenberg, 1969: 84-100; Laurence, 1970: 178).

Perhaps black children are indirectly influenced by black adults who do know these facts. This assumption is plausible, but it cannot be documented. What little evidence we do have suggests that political attitudes such as feelings of efficacy and cynicism are not usually transmitted

from parents to children (Jennings and Neimi, 1968; Dowse and Hughes, 1969). Of course, black schoolchildren might learn political attitudes from adults other than their parents or from politically knowledgable schoolchildren who act as opinion leaders. But to my knowledge no data support either of these assumptions.[29]

Even though we cannot spell out the processes through which black children may learn about political reality, that explanation leads to a series of empirical consequences that are supported by extant research findings:

Empirical Consequence D.1. Feelings of political effectiveness and political trust should be lower among blacks who understand political realities than among blacks who do not.

We have one datum that allows us to test directly the relationship between political knowledge and political trust among black schoolchildren. Greenberg asked his respondents whether "Negroes and whites are treated the same." Among black schoolchildren in Philadelphia, a "correct" perception that they were not, was negatively related to political trust. Among black schoolchildren who said Negroes and whites were not treated the same (n = 162), 45 per cent said the government in Washington could

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[29]One might ask whether it is necessary for black children to be directly influenced by political realities for the political reality explanation to be valid. For example, black children could learn, through their day-to-day experiences, that whites cannot be trusted and might then project this generalized knowledge about whites to political leaders (whom they know to be almost all white). But such a learning process could best be accounted for by the social deprivation explanation, for it is largely through the restriction of opportunity and accorded respect that blacks learn to distrust whites.

be trusted; among blacks who said they were treated the same (n = 186), 61 per cent trusted government officials.[30]

Empirical Consequence D.2. Racial differences on feelings of political efficacy should be reduced or reversed in settings where blacks have political power.

I earlier cited Jones's finding that in Lake County, Indiana, whites were more likely than blacks to agree that "People like me and my parents don't have any say about what the government of our city does." Jones' explanation for this finding is consistent with the political reality explanation: "The whites of Gary are outnumbered by Negroes, Negroes are very active politically, and there is a larger percentage of white Republicans in a city dominated by the Democratic party" (Jones, 1965: 166).

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[30]To some extent this may be an artifact of age differences, as the proportion of blacks who said Negroes and whites were not treated the same was markedly higher among older children.

Age differences might be used as an indirect test of Empirical Consequence D.1. But increasing racial differences among older children is an additional empirical consequence of all four explanations. Older children are more likely to be exposed to the political education of the schools and to differential social structures. Measured intelligence differences among black and whites are greater among older children than younger children. And, as we have just seen, older children are more likely to have "correct" perceptions of political reality.

Since increasing age differences between blacks and whites are a logical consequence of all four explanations, it may be useful to point out that, by and large, such differences do in fact obtain. Racial differences in sense of political efficacy were greater among older children than among younger children in both Lyons' (1970) study of Toledo and Laurence's (1970) study of Sacremento. Lyons' data on cynicism are less consistent. Among inner city children, racial differences were greater among older children than among younger children, but among his "control" group the reverse relationship obtained. Laurence reports that on all trust items, racial differences were greater among older children than among younger children. Greenberg's (1969) Philadelphia data show that among third-graders black-white differences on trust were negligible. They became sharp among fifth- and seventh-graders. Among ninth graders trust also dropped among whites, but blacks were still less trusting than whites were.

Empirical Consequence D.3. Blacks should be more trusting toward political leaders who depend on electoral support from blacks than upon leaders who do not rely upon blacks' support. For, other things being equal, black leaders should be able to influence political leaders who rely upon black support than upon those who do not.

The decision rules for the election of the President give blacks more influence in electing the President than in electing most public leaders. Democratic Presidential candidates, in particular, have relied heavily upon the support of blacks. And Presidents, especially Democratic Presidents, have been more supportive of demands by blacks than most other elected political leaders. An empirical consequence of the political reality explanation is that blacks should have highly supportive attitudes toward the American President, especially when he is a Democrat.

As we have previously noted, Sigel found that black schoolchildren expressed more concern over Kennedy's death than white children did. Jaros found no racial differences in his measure of belief in Presidential benevolence, and Greenberg found only negligible racial differences in support for the President. I am not arguing that black schoolchildren understand the decision rules that give blacks influence in electing the President, nor that they understand that Presidents have often supported blacks' demands. (In fact, Jaros [1966: 98-102] argued that the absence of racial differences in his measure of Presidential benevolence was not the result of blacks perceiving the President as a supporter of black demands.) More plausible is that black children learned their supportive attitudes toward the President from black adults who did know that the President supported blacks. In any event, these findings about black attitudes toward the President would be predicted by the political reality explanation.

Evaluation of Alternative Explanations

Of the four explanations advanced, only the intelligence explanation can be rejected, for there is little reason why intelligence, as a set of cognitive abilities, should contribute to feelings of political effectiveness and still less why it should contribute to political trust. And even if high intelligence contributes to feelings of political effectiveness among whites, it might have the reverse effect among blacks.

The political education explanation might explain low feelings of effectiveness among blacks, but because it is essentially silent as regards trust, it has less scope than either the social deprivation or political reality explanations. Moreover, the political education explanation rests upon the questionable assumption that the schools are effective agents of political socialization.

The social deprivation explanation has considerable scope in that it can explain both findings. The assumptions on which it rests can be supported theoretically and there is empirical evidence that these assumptions are true. It is a fairly complex explanation, however, since it involves an intervening psychological variable, feelings of personal self-competence. The relationship between social deprivation and self-competence is certainly no more than a probalistic tendency. So, too, is the relationship between self-competence and feelings of political efficacy and political trust. Hence the social deprivation explanation can probably account for no more than part of the racial variation in political attitudes.

The political reality explanation has considerable scope and is also the most parsimonious of the four explanations. But it does rest upon

the assumption that black children learn about political reality, or are indirectly influenced by black adults who do know these realities. How such attitudes are conveyed is difficult to convincingly explain, especially in view of the evidence that such attitudes as political cynicism and political effectiveness are not often transmitted from parent to child. Yet, the political reality explanation did lead to several additional empirical consequences that were supported by extant socialization research.

Since the social deprivation and political reality explanations have the greatest scope, they should be considered the two best explanations. They are not mutually exclusive explanations, for both could contribute to some of the racial variation on feelings of political efficacy and trust. We probably can not evaluate their relative explanatory power, for social deprivation and political powerlessness tend to co-vary: where blacks have social opportunity they are more likely to have political power, and where blacks have political power, they can use that power to increase their social opportunities. Although these two explanations may lead to different additional empirical consequences, these consequences will not be contradictory.

We might be able to develop a higher level explanation that incorporated both the social deprivation and the political reality explanations. For example, we could develop a "deprivation" explanation which included both social and political deprivation. But this would serve little useful purpose at this stage for a higher level explanation would probably not lead us to generate propositions not already advanced by the two lower level explanations.

IV. Normative, Theoretical, and Research Implications

If our goal is to teach blacks to be more effective political actors we must increase their feelings of political effectiveness and political trust. No program of indoctrinating blacks to feel efficacious and trustful is likely to succeed. Feelings of political competence and trust among blacks must be based on an understanding of the strategies through which blacks are likely to maximize their political resources.

Educational reformers who wish to increase feelings of political efficacy and trust among blacks must understand that blacks' "low" scores on tests designed for and by whites do not mean that blacks are inferior. Given the political realities that blacks confront, as well as the social structures that erode their self-competence, we should expect black schoolchildren to have lower feelings of political efficacy and trust than white children. Marked increases in feelings of efficacy and trust among blacks are unlikely unless there are major changes in the social and political environment in which blacks live.

If, however, the social deprivation explanation is valid, political effectiveness and trust among blacks are likely to increase if there are changes in educational policies leading to increased social opportunity and accorded respect for black schoolchildren. Opportunities for blacks, according to the Coleman Report, are best increased in racially integrated schools with a substantial proportion of white students. These opportunities are probably greater in schools that avoid rigid "tracking" schemes that reintroduce racial segregation. Despite the fact that blacks are often demanding a return to segregation, it is my belief that opportunities and accorded respect for blacks can best be increased within a system of integrated schools in which blacks learn to compete successfully with whites.

At a theoretical level, I have suggested the need to eschew research that examines modal socialization patterns. Studying modal values may be important in high consensus societies, but most modern societies have a wide range of class, ethnic, regional, and religious diversity that must be accounted for by any theory of socialization. Unlike students of modal socialization patterns, who may consciously avoid the study of structural arrangements (See Easton, 1965: 49), students of sub-cultural socialization must attempt to specify the social and political structures that contribute to differential learning among different social groups.

The research implications of this paper are fairly extensive. By carefully spelling out the assumptions underlying each of these four explanations we have pointed directly to hypotheses that must be tested through future empirical research. Several research problems seem crucial. We need to know what is being taught in the schools. Such data can probably best be obtained through open-ended strategies relying upon participant observation and the use of students as informants rather than mere respondents. We need to study the role of self-competence as an intervening psychological variable. And, the political reality explanation which seems so intuitively appealing deserves serious research consideration. The plausibility of this explanation might be increased through quasi-experimental panel studies that examined political attitudes among black schoolchildren before and after a political event which directly tested black political power, for example, a mayoral election with a black candidate. But the explanation can be validated only if we can specify the processes through which children learn to respond correctly to complex political realities.

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